

**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO  
PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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**DEDICATION**

This mini-dissertation is dedicated to my late father, Solomon Ketetši Sebola for the role he played in my upbringing, especially during my teenage-hood. Even though you are not here to witness it, your discipline bears fruits!

**DECLARATION**

I declare that **THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA** is my own work and that all the sources consulted have been duly acknowledged by means of complete references.

**MOHLALA ALETTA**

SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

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## **ABSTRACT**

Safety in schools has become an issue of concern in the whole country. The Department of Basic Education's record of safety in schools is being questioned by a number of incidents and cases that indicated that schools are indeed unsafe.

Therefore, this study focuses on the role of the School Governing Bodies in the implementation of Safety Policy in the rural primary and secondary school areas of Mamabolo. The study focused on three secondary schools and four primary schools. The research concentrated only on the views of chairpersons of SGBs, principals, teachers and Assistant Director for governance in schools. Qualitative data was collected through observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Data was transcribed, coded and categorised into themes. The findings revealed that the School Governing Bodies lack capacitation in the promotion of safety in schools. Challenges that were identified include lack of training, lack of funds, unavailability of police, unavailability of security officers, and lack of support from the Limpopo Department of Education.

The study recommends that schools be provided with security personnel to regulate access control and conduct searches and seizures, addition of safety course or module to teacher training at institutions of higher learning and a design of a common safety policy by the circuit office. Additionally, parents should take part in the discipline of their children at home. Last, but not least, the department should provide schools with thorough training on the promotion of safety in schools.

***Key concepts: School, Safety, Policy, School Governing Body, Learner, Child***

## DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The following concepts were used in the study and are defined as follows:

- **Child**

Lexicon dictionary explains a child as a young human being below the age of puberty or below the legal age of maturity. According to the **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**, a child means a person under the age of 18. In this study, a child meant a minor younger than 18 years of age.

- **Learner/student**

According to the **South African Schools Act**, a concept “learner” refers to any person receiving tuition or who is obliged to receive education. In this study, a learner refers to a child that attends in a particular school.

- **Safety**

It refers to the state of being away from hazards caused by natural forces or human errors randomly. The source of hazards is formed by natural forces and/or human errors (Selçuk, 2005:53). It is a condition of being safe from undergoing or causing hurt, injury or loss. This means a situation that is free of any form of harm to people. It might be physical, mental or emotional harm.

- **Policy**

For a policy to be declared a policy, it should undergo the four stages, namely: policy initiation, policy formulation, policy implementation and policy evaluation. Policy in this study refers to the guidelines prescribed in a school safety policy.

- **School**

It can be referred to as a place where teaching and learning processes take place. According to the **Employment of Educators Act**, the concept “school” refers to an educational institution or such an institution at which education as well as training, including pre-primary education is catered for and which is sustained, managed and controlled or subsidized by a provincial government. **South African Schools Act**

defines a school as a public or independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades between grade zero and grade twelve.

- **School Governing Body (SGB)**

SGB is a body into which the powers of governance have been vested subject to the South African Schools Act. It stands in the position of trust towards the school. It is a body/board that is responsible for the welfare of the school and people within it.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BEFA – Basic Education For All

CPF – Community Policing Forum

DBE – Department of Basic Education

DoE – Department of Education

MEC – Member of Executive Council

NDP – National Development Plan

SABC – South African Broadcasting Corporation

SASA – South African Schools Act

SGB – School Governing Body



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## **CHAPTER ONE (INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY)**

### **1.1. OVERVIEW**

Safety at schools has become a concern in the whole country and subsequently, the Mamabolo Circuit is not exempted from this occurrence. The Department of Basic Education held the second Schools Safety Summit on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018 under the theme, “Strengthening Safety Nets and Ensuring Safe School Environment for Teaching and Learning. The Minister indicated that, “our schools are increasingly becoming a crime scene. There is indeed a correlation between high levels of criminality in our society which manifests into our schools.” Therefore, understanding what constitutes safety and who are the role players in ensuring safety is of paramount importance for policy makers on policies that target safety in schools. Moreover, it may help to improve schools’ safety.

Safety has gained great attention across the country and all over the world in various industries, including the education and training industry. Schools face this problem at some point in their evolution. Cantone *et al* (2015: 54) denotes that as a result of recent widespread use of smartphones, another phenomenon of cyberbullying has emerged. Cyberbullying allows the perpetrator to anonymously intensify the feelings of discomfort in their victim. Given this reality, schools should therefore take an interest in the safety of their learners and teachers as it may be a costly phenomenon. This is so because the impact is likely to affect learners’ and teachers’ well-being.

The motivation for this study is from the untested findings obtained through observation and media reports on the incidences that occur in public schools. The researcher witnessed among others weapons being surrendered to the police officials during school search, learners being stabbed within school premises and exposure to environmental hazards within the school. This chapter presents the background to the study, problem statement, purpose and significance of the study and the questions that guided the study. It also provides an outline of ethical considerations, definition of concepts, as well as the theoretical framework anchoring this study.

### **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The **Regulations for Safety Measures at all Public Schools** (R1040, 2001, Paragraph 4.2) by the Department of Education (DoE) declares that all public schools are weapon-free and drug-free zones. No person may possess dangerous weapons or enter the premises while under the influence of an illegal drug. The **Regulations for Safety Measures at all Public Schools** (R1040, 2001, Paragraph 4.3), also make provision for the searching of school premises or persons within the premises by a police officer, principal or delegate if there is reasonable suspicion of possession of dangerous weapons or substances. The question arises as to whether safety amounts to the prohibition of narcotics and weapons only, or does it include other aspects relating to, for instance, harassment or bullying, or over infrastructure maintenance and the dangers posed by environmental factors.

Some schools may be unsafe for learners and teachers. Media reports are increasingly questioning the Department's record on ensuring safety in schools. According to SABC news (2018), the Limpopo Department of Education was engaged in a trial of a Grade 5 learner who died after falling into a pit toilet. The local Radio Station, Thobela FM, reported on March 14, 2018 that learners in the Bochum area were taught under the trees as their classrooms were not safe to enter. In addition, Review online (2018) reported an incident at a school where learners were suspended for fighting with pangas. From the above-stated media reports, it seemed that protection and safety in schools were compromised.

Some incidents went unnoticed as they were not published. The researcher witnessed a fatal incident where a learner stabbed another learner in the head in a school at which she was employed. A study by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention conducted in 2008, revealed that 15,3% of children at primary and secondary schools had experienced some form of violence at schools (Burton, 2008:1).

In addition, the Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) for Education in Limpopo emphasized in a speech at the Basic Education For All Conference (BEFA), held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2017 that "schools are supposed to be safe places." The MEC, for instance, indicated that sexual violence and harassment of female learners was a serious problem in many schools, and that educators should assume the role of parents during school hours as *in loco parentis*.

Furthermore, according to the **South African Schools Act, 1996** (Act 84 of 1996), the SGB should maintain and improve the schools' property. Hence, the Department of Education (2008:1) asserted that it was committed to providing a (physical) environment for the delivery of quality teaching and learning by promoting the rights and safety of all learners, educators and parents. Therefore, the SGB should play a vital role in promoting safety in schools.

Safety assurance at schools might have costly implications as the school might be held liable for injuries or even deaths that occur on the school premises. Furthermore, the school might have to incur medical expenses for injuries endured within the premises. Moreover, it might impact detrimentally on the reputation of the school as not being a conducive environment for learning and teaching. Hence, safety in schools was a critical issue that needed to be given urgent attention.

Though substantive literature has documented the phenomenon of school safety in many parts of the world, less effort was placed in understanding the role that the SGB plays in promoting safety in schools. This study intended to contribute to the understanding of school safety by modelling the relationship between school safety and the roles of SGBs.

### **1.3. MOTIVATION/RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

Times have changed, and apparently, there exists constant fear and a growing need to address the issue of safety in-depth. According to News24 (2018), a teenager appeared in court after a school shooting- a 15- year -old was alleged to have brought a gun that was used to shoot an 18-year old at school. In a separate case, the court denied bail for a Limpopo pupil accused of murdering a classmate (News24, 2018). In addition, a Gauteng principal resigned after a sex video scandal (News24, 2018). In addition, a five-year-old, Grade R learner drowned in a pit toilet in the Eastern Cape (News24, 2018).

Moreover, the **School Infrastructure Safety and Security Guidelines** (DBE, 2017. Par 3.2) mentioned some of the factors that are associated with increased crime rate at schools as...

- “(a) Ineffective school leadership, poor management of the school and poor school governance;*
- (b) Ill-discipline across the school;*
- (c) School size - school crime has been observed to be more pronounced in larger schools than in smaller schools;*
- (d) Overcrowding and class size - where the number of learners per class is generally high leading to overcrowding, difficulties are experienced in controlling the class and misbehaviour goes on unnoticed;*
- (e) The school level- Secondary schools are reported to be 13 times more likely to be violent than primary schools;*
- (f) Age of learners, especially boys - older learners are prone to intimidation and bullying;*
- (g) Location of the school- schools in townships, especially in and around informal settlements are more prone to violent crime.*
- (h) Unemployment and poverty;*
- (i) Inadequate security measures due to shortage of funds;*
- (j) Poor resources and infrastructure; and*
- (k) Types of school buildings and environmental design”.*

Hence, the call for the provision of physical safety measures in schools, to ensure that safety was enhanced, and violence was minimised. Not only do learners bring weapons to school, the school premises themselves have shown to be unsafe as well.

#### **1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

School safety has become a general problem of great importance as it affects the delivery of education services. School safety is a fundamental aspect in ensuring provision of quality education. The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 also argued that in order to improve the quality of education, urgent action is needed to be taken to deal with safety at schools.



In addition to contributing to the literature on safety in schools, the researcher hoped that the study might be beneficial to the Limpopo Department of Education on the extent to which safety was a challenge at schools and also to be of value to policy makers to amend the roles and functions of SGBs by being specific on what they need to do in relation to safety in schools.

The researcher also believed that in schools, teachers and learners might gain better understanding of their role in ensuring their own safety and safety of others. Moreover, that the SGBs might gain a clear understanding of the role they need to play in ensuring or promoting safety in schools.

### **1.5. AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study was to assess the role that the School Governing Body played in enhancing safety in public schools in Mamabolo Circuit, Limpopo Province.

### **1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- What were the roles and functions of an SGB in relation to school's safety?
- What was the current status of safety in schools in the Mamabolo Circuit in the Limpopo Province?
- How effective were SGBs in promoting safety, in the Mamabolo Circuit in the Limpopo Province generally?
- What were possible ways to promote safety in schools?

### **1.7. OBJECTIVES**

To achieve its intended goal, the study was guided by the following objectives:

- To determine the roles and functions of the SGB in relation to school's safety;
- To examine the status of safety in schools in the Mamabolo Circuit in the Limpopo Province;

- To investigate the effectiveness of the SGBs in promoting safety in the Mamabolo Circuit in Limpopo Province; and
- To propose possible ways of promoting safety in schools

### **1.8. ASSUMPTION OF THE STUDY**

The study was based on the following assumptions:

- Observations, interviews and document analysis were adequate instruments for the study.
- The information given by the respondents was honest.
- School Governing Bodies are not fully aware of their role in relation to safety issues at schools.
- Implementation of safety measures is hindered by certain barriers.

### **1.9. OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION**

The study has been divided into five chapters which entail the following:

- **Chapter 1**

The chapter introduces the research to the reader. It explains the background of the study, identifies the research problem, describes the significance of the study, and identifies the research questions, aims and objectives of the study. It serves as the introduction to all the other chapters.

- **Chapter 2**

This chapter establishes the literature review of the study. It explains the theoretical, conceptual and legislative frameworks. It unveils what other researchers, authors, academics and philosophers address with regard to the role of SGBs in promoting safety policy in schools.

- **Chapter 3**

The chapter covers the research design of the study. It explains the data collection process, ethical issues, validity and reliability issues, limitations and delimitations of the study.

- **Chapter 4**

The chapter covers the research findings, analysis and interpretation of the study

- **Chapter 5**

As the last chapter, it describes the conclusion reached and recommendations made with regard to the findings. It provides the summary of the research.

### **1.10. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

Due to the limitation of time, not all public schools in Mamabolo circuit were studied. The study explored the case of Mamabolo Circuit, Limpopo Department of Education. Thus, the sample size might not be sufficient enough for findings to be generalised or regarded as nationally applicable. The documents that were reviewed might limit the extent to which the findings can be generalised. The Department had been in the public eye with the same challenge for some time, data collection was restricted.

### **1.11. CONCLUSION**

This chapter provides an overview of the context in which the study took place; the background and rationale of the study, the problem statement, research questions, the ethical elements that had to be considered throughout the study and the significance of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO (LITERATURE REVIEW)**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

Schools' safety is a challenge not only faced and experienced, or a concern for South Africa, but a global challenge. Different researchers have studied this phenomenon and arrived at different findings. A study by Breetzke, Fabris-Rotelli, Modiba & Edelstein (2021: 781) suggests that schools and their surrounding environments may attract crime and place individuals at an increased risk of sexual victimization. It found that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the studied schools had more than 40 incidents within a 600m buffer distance over the course of the study period. On the other hand, Masilo (2018: 14), adds that bullying is one of the causes of violent crime in schools, and it constitutes a significant challenge for school safety and indirectly undermines the creation of enabling school environment that supports personal growth and development.

The following literature review addresses *inter alia* a conceptualisation of school safety, an analysis of school safety in terms of legislation and a discussion on the role of the SGB. This is followed by a detailed discussion on the current strategies to ensure safer schools.

### **2.2. SCHOOL SAFETY**

According to different researchers, a safe school can be characterised by certain common descriptive indicators. Prinsloo (2005:5), defines a safe school as a place that is free of danger and where there is absence of possible harm. Stephens (2003) in Barton (2009:8) defines a safe school as a place where the business of education can be conducted in a welcoming environment free of intimidation, violence and fear. It is a setting that provides an educational climate that fosters the spirit of acceptance and care for every child. According to Xaba (2014: 1583), safety can be understood as a situation or condition that is not dangerous or that is devoid of threats. In the context of the existence of people or occupants in an environment, safety can be understood as a feeling, experience or perceptions that emanate from the condition or environment that is not dangerous – that is safe.

However, Barton (2009:7) argues that a safe school is difficult to define, but provides indicators that characterise a safe school as: an institution that has a team-developed safety plan and an implementation strategy; which allocates resources for the implementation of this plan; advocates programmes and policies that address forms of violence and aggression; as well as partner with communities and has a clean learning environment.

According to Stephens in Barton (2009:9), there are **five factors** that contribute to a safe school and should be used in assessing levels of safety needs, namely:

1. Cultural and personal characteristics of students and staff;
2. Students and staff knowledge, skills and attitudes towards peaceful conflict resolution;
3. Social environment on campus;
4. Local political environment surrounding the school; and
5. A structurally sound physical environment.

Osher and Kendziora (2010:111), categorise school safety into three, namely: physical safety, emotional safety and intellectual safety. Physical safety refers to the protection of all stakeholders, i.e. students, school staff and the community, from violence, theft and exposure to weapons and threats in order to establish a secure learning environment. Emotional safety is hard to identify. It involves the 'normal' teasing that kids inflict on one another (Merrow, 2004:24). Intellectual safety is closely connected to academic achievement. It means that students feel free to think and question and doubt. It is an environment where students do not feel restricted in their ability to admit what they do not know, and the teachers feel that they can admit that as well (Merrow, 2004:27). Manvell (2012: 13) adds that a school should be a place where you are not expected to already know, but where you are nurtured into knowing. A school climate where learners laugh at the wrong answer causes the learner to immediately shut down and refuse to participate, and consequently, learning stops. Thus, intellectually safe schools value ideas and exploration.

Maslow, in his hierarchy of needs, categorises needs on five levels. The second level of needs is the need for safety and Maslow regards safety as the need for security and protection, (Kaur, 2013: 1064). Schools do not have to deal with common learner misdemeanours, but also with learners involved in criminal behaviour at schools which

can be injurious to teachers and fellow learners (Masitsa, 2011:171). A study conducted by Van Jaarsveld (2011: 193) found that most security measures needed attention at schools. She also found that the majority of the scholars and educators were not familiar with the written security plans and most schools did not have the appropriate emergency plans in place at their schools.

According to Makota and Leoschut (2016:18), a school violence study conducted in 2012 found that 22.2% of learners in secondary schools have been victims of threats of violence, assault, sexual assault and robbery while at school. Also, that violence is perpetrated by other learners who are either classmates of the victims or other learners at school. This may have a negative impact on the academic excellence at school.

### **2.3. SCHOOL SAFETY AND LEGISLATION**

South Africa as a member of the United Nations' Conventions on the Rights of the Child, is required to comply with child custody and guardianship laws. States ratifying these conventions are obliged to protect the children by taking appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures. The aim is to protect and promote the rights of children around the world. Such laws include the **South African Schools Act**, 1996 (Act no 84 of 1996), **Occupational Health and Safety Act**, 1993 (Act no 38 of 1993), **Drugs and Drug Trafficking Act**, 1992 (Act no 140 of 1992), **Road Traffic Act**, 1989 (Act no 29 of 1989), as well as the **Child Care Act**, 1983 (Act no 74 of 1983).

South Africa has adopted policies that recognise the need for safety of learners and educators as a prerequisite for quality learning at schools. **The Convention on the Rights of the Child** (United Nations, 1989), was ratified on 16 June 1995 to set global standards to ensure protection of human rights for children. **The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children** (African Union, 1990), was ratified on 7 January 2000 to declare that the state should take measures to protect the child from all forms of torture or degrading treatment.

Since the dawn of democracy in South Africa, a number of laws and policies were passed to protect the rights and safety of learners. The **South African Schools Act, 1996** (Act no 84 of 1996), extends the governance authority in schools to the School Governing Bodies (SGBs), which have to develop several policies including a safety policy. In addition, the Department of Education has developed the **National Schools Safety Framework (2016)** that serves as a management tool for all stakeholders in dealing with safety issues at schools, as well as the **National Strategy for the Prevention and Management of Alcohol and Drugs (2013)** for use amongst learners.

#### **a. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**

Chapter 2 of **The Constitution of The Republic of South Africa, 1996** (South Africa, 1996:7) enshrines the rights to basic education, right to life and right not to be unfairly discriminated against. **The Constitution of The Republic of South Africa, 1996** (South Africa, 1996:3) is the supreme law of the country that supersedes all other laws. Furthermore, Section 24 of **The Constitution of The Republic of South Africa, 1996** (South Africa, 1996:11) provides everyone with the right to an environment that is not harmful to his or her health or well-being. This right protects learners from being exposed to harmful environments, including schools. Coupled with Section 29 of **The Constitution of The Republic of South Africa, 1996** (South Africa, 1996:14) which gives the right to education, this means that learners have the right to receive education in a safe schooling environment.

#### **b. The Children's Act**

The **Children's Act, 2005** (Act no 38 of 2005), deals with the matters related to children. It gives effect to the rights of children to care and protection as enshrined in the Constitution. The purpose of this Act is amongst others, to protect children from discrimination, exploitation and any other physical, emotional or moral harm or hazards, thus ensuring that children grow up in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

#### **c. The Child Justice Act**

The **Child Justice Act**, 2008 (Act no 75 of 2008) provides a framework for dealing with children who are accused of criminal offences. It ensures children's accountability and respect for freedom of others. It also makes provision to divert children from offences into family care and to limit stigma attached to crime. The diversion means that an accused child should not be subjected to the formal criminal proceedings like adults. The Act gives children a right to be protected against abuse and degradation.

#### **d. The Child Care Act**

The **Child Care Act**, 1983 (Act no 74 of 1983) is concerned with the protection of children from abuse in any general occurrence and indicates that such cases must be reported. A parent or guardian to a child who allows children to be abused is guilty of offence in terms of Section 50(1). Furthermore, teachers are expected to act in *loco parentis* in terms of the **South African Schools Act**, 1996 (Act no 84 of 1996). This means that educators can be held liable in terms of the **Child Care Act**, 1983 (Act no 74 of 1983), if they are found guilty of exposing learners to abuse.

#### **e. Drugs and Drug Trafficking Act**

The **Drugs and Drug Trafficking Act**, 1992 (Act no 29 of 1992) prohibits the supply and possession of drugs as well as dealing with drugs. Failure to comply can lead to criminal liability and prosecution. It also provides for the obligation to report information that can help contravention of this Act to the police.

#### **f. Occupational Health and Safety Act**

The **Occupational Health and Safety Act**, 1999 (Act no 85 of 1999), applies to schools with facilities such as science laboratories that can pose danger to personal safety of employees or others working in such facilities. According to this Act, schools must appoint safety representatives and safety committees to ensure safety in schools. In a document entitled, *The Occupational Health and Safety in Schools, Colleges and Universities* (2008:2) issued by the Department of Labour, it is stipulated that where there are more than twenty workers employed, there should be a health and safety representative for every hundred people and where more than one representative is designated, there should be a health and safety committee.



The employer shall provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of employees. Therefore, schools need to be aware of the various aspects of health and safety in the school environment. These include science laboratories, play areas, sports fields and parking areas.

#### **g. Road Traffic Act**

Road Traffic Regulations as stipulated by the **Road Traffic Act, 1989** (Act no 29 of 1989) deals with road traffic and road safety with regard to learners. This means that scholar transport must comply with licensing and roadworthiness regulations. The Act also provides for measures concerning learner patrols and pedestrian crossings. The amendment of **National Road Traffic Regulation 250**, which previously indicated that “no person could be carried in the goods compartment of a vehicle”, effected a change which states that no school children may be carried in the goods compartment of a vehicle for reward.

#### **h. South African Schools Act**

Section 21(1) (a) of the **South African Schools Act, 1996** (Act no 84 of 1996) provides for the SGB to allocate the function of maintaining and improving the school’s property, while Section 20(1) (g) requires the SGB to administer and control the property, buildings, and school grounds occupied by the school. In addition, Section 8 provides for the SGB to adopt the code of conduct for learners which is aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process.

Section 10 of the **South African Schools Act, 1996** (Act no 84 of 1996) has outlawed the administration of corporal punishment to learners. However, Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:5) revealed that corporal punishment was the second most prevalent form of violence in schools. The study revealed that 60% of the schools are still practicing corporal punishment as a form of disciplining learners. Despite it being banned, teachers remain perpetrators of this unlawful act.

### **2.4. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY**

The legislature may pass legislation on school safety, but legislation does not become meaningful for end users until the school decision determine how the legislation will be contextualised. The SGB decides on how they are to implement the legislation in relation to their school circumstances. A primary role of the SGB is to develop a school policy which includes policies dealing with safety and school discipline (Prinsloo, 2005:10). Another function of the SGB, according to the **South African Schools Act, 1996** (Act no 84 of 1996) is to maintain school buildings and school grounds. This involves surety that the school premises are free of dangerous objects, are in good repair, as well as maintenance of equipment; keeping them in good working order.

The SGB carries a mandate to develop the code of conduct for learners. Duke and Canady (1994:94), refer to a code of conduct as the school rules, defined as formal statements of expected behaviour for which consequences exist if the expectations are not met. These rules are meant to protect the interest of everyone in the school. On the other hand, school rules may be created to forestall misconduct before it occurs and to reduce unacceptably high levels of misconduct (Duke & Canady, 1991:96). The code of conduct for learners should address the rules and also the consequences of failure to obey the rules.

Xaba (2011:201) argues that SGBs tend to overlook the enforcement of the learners' code of conduct as they are possibly not adequately empowered to perform this function. Formulation of the code of conduct should be positive, rather than punitive in order to facilitate constructive learning (Rossouw, 2007:80). In addition, Mestry and Khumalo (2012:102), report that parents serving on the SGB lacked the necessary knowledge, skills and experience on school matters, especially knowledge of legislation. SGB should create safe, caring and culturally responsive schools to support students' academic growth and their social, physical and emotional well-being.

Schools are now managed on the basis of decentralised authority. The National Department of Education has given schools the power to make operational decisions, without having to request approval. This has fostered increased need for collaboration at all levels and with all stakeholders, including an SGB, to deal with issues that affect the well-being of learners (Chukwu, 2008:27).

## **2.5. SCHOOL SAFETY IN OTHER COUNTRIES: SELECTED EXAMPLES**

Of late, reports have indicated that violent incidents are also prevalent in different parts of the world. For instance, official statistics indicate that 94 school gun violence incidents were recorded in the United States of America in 2018 only. This is reported to be the highest incidences recorded yet. This constitutes a 59% increase in such incidences since the 2006 high incidence record of 59, (Center For Homeland Defense and Security, 2018). Also, in an African context, Kenya has been seen as the most researched country on issues of school safety because of a high prevalence of school safety cases pertaining to this country.

### **a. United States of America**

According to the US President, every child deserves to grow up in a safe community surrounded by a loving family and to have a future filled with opportunity and with hope. This has led to the establishment of Federal Commission on School Safety, which will deal with providing meaningful and actionable recommendations to keep learners safe at school (Federal Commission of School Safety, 2018:13). However, safety still remains an issue. According to official statistics, 2018 was seen to be the worst year as it recorded deaths of 55 people, from the second worst which was in 1993. The report indicated that there had been nearly 328 school mass shootings in 2018 (Centre for Homeland Defense and Security, 2018).

Lessne, Yanes, Sinclair and Hasen (2018:28) revealed that students fall victims of bullying, crime and hate speech. This happens within school buildings, school grounds, on school buses or commuting in other ways to, or from school. It is further indicated that middle school students felt much safer at school and in the surrounding areas than high school students.

According to the California School Boards Associations (CBSA), the governing board of a school is elected to serve as a steward of the community's schools and plays a critical role in providing safe environments for staff and students. The body establishes policies, practices and relationships that enhance school security and creates a positive school climate where all learners can learn, grow and thrive (CBSA, 2010:3).

## **b. Kenya**

The Ministry of Education in Kenya has given guidelines for establishing Safety Standards in schools to ensure safety for learners (Oguye, 2012:4). The Safety Standards outline that unprecedented insecurity from personal threats, inappropriate school facilities and infrastructure, whereby poorly constructed classrooms and playgrounds, insufficient and broken-down toilet facilities, gender insensitive locations of toilet and bathroom facilities, and inadequate and inappropriate desks and other furniture can cause insecurity. Therefore, enhanced school safety is necessary for both students and teachers for promotion of effective teaching and learning. Despite all this, it is noted that accidents still occur in schools. Therefore, it is important to put safety measures in place to make a difference.

Kemunto, Role and Balyage (2015:33) reported that the unsatisfactory implementation of safety policies in Kenya was attributable to a variety of factors including inadequate time and funds, low technical capacity, lack of proper coordination and supervision from the Ministry of Education, the role of teachers and students not clearly defined and ill-discipline among students.

The National Crime Research Centre added that there is a major policy gap and weak system on indiscipline cases of learners who transfer between schools (National Crime Research Centre, 2016:32). Students are expelled from one school and get admitted in another, thus making it difficult to protect the rest of students from such students.

Despite researchers having reported their findings and recommended several ways of dealing with school safety in Kenya, it has become no exception to school violence. The Star newspaper reported that the second term of school calendar in Kenya had been characterised by student riots and burning of structures (The Star, 2018). By July 2018, 63 schools had experienced riots and arson targeting school dormitories and administration blocks. In September 2017, 9 girls were killed in a fire caused by arson in Nairobi (BBC News. 2017), while in July 2016, a boarding school in Western Kenya was reported to have burned down.

## **2.6. STRATEGIES FOR SAFE SCHOOLS**

According to Robertson (2010:82), safety policies should be planned as a tool for prevention of injuries, the protection of children and the promotion of safe practices in the early childhood environment. The effective application of these policies minimises the risks to children and maximizes the early childhood environment for safety.

The study by Burton and Leoschut (2013) on School Violence in South Africa: Results of the 2012 National School Violence Study, recommend that the planning and implementation of school safety plans and strategies should be integrated into local development and safety plans, ensuring partnerships with other relevant local stakeholders, with clear lines of responsibilities and accountability defined and that making a real impact on school violence and achieving safe school environments is only likely to happen when school safety is integrated as a fundamental component of local safety strategies, and when the role and commitment of all stakeholders – beyond just schools – is recognised and secured in working towards local level community safety strategies. Safety planning aims to put in place procedures to keep people safe and to help prevent disasters from occurring. Barton (2009:9) adds that, safe schools tend to have school plans that are user-friendly and up-to-date, and whose contents are communicated to and practised by school staff.

#### **a. Safety Hints**

Safety in any institution, such as a school, is a team effort. Everyone needs to be aware of the safety requirements. Schools should, on the other hand, take note of some of the safety hints as described below:

- Security liaison officer

The school should designate a security liaison officer to be responsible for developing security and safety procedures. The security liaison will assist in general safety planning which is aimed towards the prevention of crime, violence and accidents on school premises. They can also coordinate the development of procedures to ensure students and staff security and safety during or immediately following a crisis (Brock, Sandoval & Lewis, 1996:198-199). Crawford and Burns (2015: 634) add that Security liaison officers can be effective in dealing with crime at school as they are found to be promising in confronting problems regarding bullying, racial tensions, learner disrespect, and gangs.

- Maintenance in the laboratory

According to Everett and Jenkins (1991:118), the wear and tear on a school science laboratory is substantial and attention should be given on regular basis to the conditions of the floors, sinks, ventilation systems and main services. Inadequacies should be noted and remedied immediately. Maintenance of school facilities, such as laboratories, can be regarded as the basic requirement for securing the school environment in that it ensures that all equipment and facilities are usable and safe and thus provide conditions that are effected, created or made to exist because certain actions have been taken or certain measures have been put in place, (Xaba, 2014: 1583).

- Student involvement

The school should include learners as members of the school safety committee. Learners can provide insightful prevention suggestions and can let administrators know which areas of the school learners avoid and why (Brock, Sandoval & Lewis, 1996:211). Learners can have first-hand information on issues that relate to safety.

- Dealing with gangs

Schools ought to work closely with local law enforcement agencies. In many instances, a response to gang activities, or perceived threats of gang violence, includes swift and expansive disciplinary action in a form of zero tolerance policies or law enforcement, (Sinthumule & Tswanani, 2017: 170). This can lead to learners being suspended or expelled from the school. Section 3 of the **Regulations for Safety Measures at All Public Schools** adds that a police official can search all persons present at the schools to retrieve any weapons that might be in their possession.

- Training

Staff development should cover a wide range of topics related to school safety. These include suicide prevention, behaviour management, first aid and others (Brock, Sandoval & Lewis, 1996:214). When staff have skills to handle disruptive students, many potential problems may be avoided.

A School safety team must develop a school safety assessment tool which will guide them in the area of safety that they must address (Barton, 2009:15). In addition, Burner and Lewis (2009:6) outline 27 strategies that may help in prevention and intervention on safety. The strategies are divided into three categories: planning strategies, response strategies and professional development strategies.

Schools should have policies that include clear, consistent and fair rules to reduce violence. Additionally, schools should control access to school during and after school hours, encourage learners to take responsibility for their part in maintaining school safety by reporting any unwanted behaviours happening in school (Masitsa, 2011:172).

## **2.7. CONCLUSION**

This chapter focused on the meaning and significance of school safety, the role that the School Governing Body should play in the school in terms of safety. The literature review revealed the importance of school safety; hence the government had put in place measures that need to be implemented in schools to ensure safety of learners. Finally, the literature review outlined some strategies that may help to promote school safety.

## **CHAPTER THREE (RESEARCH METHODOLOGY)**

### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

The study aimed to do a systematic assessment of the role played by SGBs in enhancing safety in schools. However, a systematic assessment should be informed by a particular paradigm which encapsulates the philosophical assumptions that guide the researcher as to what already exists. Barker (2003:312) defines a paradigm as a model or pattern containing a set of legitimated assumptions and a design for collecting and interpreting data. From this definition, positivism, critical social science and interpretivism come to mind.

As the study was interested in gaining insight into and understanding the SGB roles in safety enhancement, it therefore, was appropriate to use qualitative methodology in order to study the phenomenon in its natural setting and attempt to make sense of or interpret from the respondents' point of view. This chapter demonstrates further how the methodology and research design are appropriate to answer the research questions. It therefore, commences with a discussion of interpretivist paradigm as the appropriate philosophy to achieve the research goals, followed by a description of the research methods employed to collect and analyse data, then the ethical considerations pertaining to the study.

### **3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM**

According to Kivunja & Kuyini (2017: 26), a research paradigm constitutes the abstract beliefs and principles that shape how a researcher looks at the world, and how she/he interprets and acts within that world. A number of paradigms exist in the world of researchers; such as positivism, interpretivism, transformative and pragmatic paradigms. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007: 19), Positivist paradigm defines a worldview which is grounded in what is known in research methods as scientific method of investigation,. While Martens (2015) suggest that Transformative paradigm is concerned with the power relationships set up within social structures and the treatment of research as an act of construction rather than discovery. Researchers Tashakkori & Teddlie (2011: 289) proposed the other paradigm to research known as Pragmatic paradigm, which borrows some elements from the other three paradigms. This paradigm was arose from the argument that it was not possible to access the



truth about the real world from a single scientific method as advocated by Positivist paradigm, nor was it possible to determine social reality as constructed under the Interpretivist paradigm, (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2015: 35).

The study was located within the interpretivist paradigm which predominantly uses qualitative methodology. The interpretivist paradigm is aimed at understanding the subjective world of the human experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:21). It begins with individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:22).

According to Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape (2014:8), interpretivism argues that perceptions relate to human interpretations of what senses tell and that knowledge of the world is based upon an understanding that arises from reflections on what happens and not just experiences. In interpretivism, social world is mediated through meaning and human agency. Kivunja & Kuyini(2015: 34), reiterates that in the interpretive tradition, there are no correct or incorrect theories, instead theories are judged on their relevance to the research and its objectives.

The researcher was concerned with exploring and understanding the social world through participants' and researcher's understanding (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005:17). Therefore, interpretive study helped build a holistic picture, formed with words, and reporting detailed views of the respondents or study subject (Okeke & Van Wyk, 2017:22). A qualitative approach was preferred in this study as the experiences of the SGB members were assessed through the use of semi-structured interviews, direct observations and analysis of school documents.

With qualitative research, the researcher investigates a problem from the respondents' point of view (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013:16). The focus was on what the respondents think and feel about promotion of safety by the SGB. Hence, a qualitative approach had the potential to discover in-depth understanding of the underlying role of SGBs with respect to promotion of safety in schools. Qualitative research is concerned with individuals' own accounts on their attitudes, motivations and behaviour. It offers richly descriptive reports of individuals' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings, the meanings and interpretations and given to events and things as well as their behaviour (Hakim, 1997:26). Qualitative research was

employed because it enabled the researcher to collect rich data on the implementation strategies employed by the SGBs in promoting safety in schools.

The researcher relied solely on the respondents' view of the phenomenon. Although personal experiences had some influence on the intention to investigate this phenomenon, the meanings and interpretations represented in this study were constructed from the interactions with the respondents.

### **3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN**

Yin (2013:19), defines a research design as the logic that links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of the study. It refers to the plans and procedures for research that describe the detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2014:1). Bak (2004:25) states that the function of a research design is to give readers a clear indication of the means by which one hopes to achieve the research aims, to outline an appropriate procedure and to indicate the sources of data that are to be used.

This study was intended to study school safety in Mamabolo Circuit. This study is an original investigation of a particular challenge that might be faced by the whole country. However, due to the limitations such as time and finance, the researcher is forced to limit the study to Mamabolo Circuit. Therefore, a case study was used to understand the phenomenon in-depth as faced by the selected schools in the Circuit.

Cameron and Price (2009:302) describe a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. Unlike surveys and experiments, case study has a potential to penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis.

### **3.4. STUDY AREA**

The study was conducted in selected schools in the Mamabolo Circuit, which is one of the five (5) circuits in the Mankweng cluster in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The circuit caters for the schools in the rural areas of Mamabolo area, Limpopo Province. The Mamabolo area is predominantly rural where the majority of parents who serve in the SGBs possess basic education only. Most people who live in the area are

unemployed and mostly elderly. They are readily available to serve in the SGB as guardians of learners, as many parents are far away due to work commitments.

Mamabolo circuit is located in Mankweng Township, 27 km from the city of Polokwane, behind Mankweng Police station and Mankweng clinic. The circuit is comprised of 28 schools of which nine (9) are secondary schools and nineteen (19) are primary schools.

### **3.5. POPULATION**

According to McMillan & Schumaker (2011), , population is analysis group of elements, whether individuals, objects or events that conform to specific criteria and to which the researcher intends to generalize the results of the research. Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:162) on the other hand describe population as the entire set of objects or people; that is the focus of a research project and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. As pointed out by Morrison (1993:152), several factors such as expense and time prevent researchers from gaining information from the whole population. Therefore, they need to be able to obtain data from a smaller group of the total population in such a way that knowledge gained is representative of the total population. In this study, the population was the School Governing Bodies of selected secondary and primary schools in Mamabolo circuit.

### **3.6. SAMPLING**

As defined by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:100), sampling is a smaller group or subset of the total population with the aim of gaining knowledge that is representative of the total population. There are two types, namely; probability and non-probability sampling methods. Qualitative studies often use non-probability sampling to select research participants.

Having been employed in the Circuit, and also based on the knowledge of the population to be researched, its elements and for the purpose of this study, the researcher used purposive sampling to select the information-rich sample on the success and challenges in implementing safety policy. Therefore, purposive sampling was used to explore the in-depth knowledge about the role that selected SGBs play in

enhancing safety in selected schools. Purposive sampling is based on the judgement of a researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013:172).

The method helped the researcher to select units that mostly have common characteristics: they were all public, non-fee schools. Purposive sampling was used because not all schools in the circuit could be visited due to time and financial constraints. The criteria used to select the sample were:

- SGB chairpersons - they are responsible for the development of policies in schools
- School principals - they are responsible for the enforcement of policies in schools
- Teacher component of the SGB – represents both the governance where policies are drawn and the implementers of such policies.
- Deputy Manager for governance at the circuit office – ensures that policies are developed and enforced by the schools.

The sample comprised of a total of seven schools: three secondary schools and four primary schools, which represented 25% of the schools in the circuit. The schools were represented by their principals, SGB chairpersons, teachers' component of SGB, as well as the Deputy Manager for governance at the circuit office. The sample was selected in the following manner: seven (7) principals, seven (7) SGB chairpersons, seven (7) teachers' representatives in SGBs, and one (1) Deputy Manager for governance at the circuit office. Therefore, twenty-two (22) respondents were interviewed.

### **3.7. DATA COLLECTION**

Qualitative data was collected through scrutiny of the execution of safety measures implemented by the particular SGB in executing their function of maintaining school buildings and school grounds. This was followed by a critical review of documents such as the school safety policy, code of conduct for learners, records on daily incidents and disciplinary records. Documents helped corroborate and augment the evidence of safety issues in schools and also for inference purposes (Yin, 2013:50).

Thereafter, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the respective SGB chairpersons, principals and the teachers' component of the selected SGBs. In addition, an interview with the relevant manager in charge of governance issues at the relevant circuit was conducted.

The researcher visited the schools personally to hand in the Department's permission letter together with the letter requesting permission from the schools. The researcher was then given dates on which she could come for data collection. Prior to the appointment dates, the researcher made telephonic reminders to the participants. The researcher met few challenges on the set dates and had to reschedule for some respondents as other urgent matters arose that affected the respondents, hence the rescheduling of appointments. Permission was granted by interviewees for the interview sessions to be tape recorded. Only two respondents could not be interviewed as they withdrew from being participants in the study.

### **3.7.1. Observations**

Observation is defined as the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects, occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them (Grinnel & Unrau, 2010:242). Direct observation helps cover events in real time (Yin, 2013:50). The researcher visited each school and observed the safety measures that were put in place. The researcher was taken to a 45-60 minutes' tour around the school premises. The elements observed were, among others, the entire school premises, and the school playing grounds, the personal protective equipment in the laboratories and kitchen, and also other safety equipment around the school. Also, the researcher observed elements such as access to the school premises, signage giving awareness of safety items, the conditions of the buildings, and precautionary measures evident in case of a safety emergency. The researcher ensured that she spent the entire school day at school to observe the activities of the whole day. She had an opportunity to observe learners when they enter the school in the morning or when they leave in the afternoon. During break time, the researcher had an opportunity to observe learners at their playing grounds. The researcher used the observation sheet to observe the safety measures put in place at schools. The observed data was documented and integrated with data collected from the interviews and data from the analysis of documents.

### **3.7.2. Semi-structured Interviews**

The researcher employed semi-structured, face-to-face interview method. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews in this study was to gain a detailed picture of the participants' perceptions about the promotion of safety in schools. This method allowed the researcher and the respondents much flexibility as the researcher could make follow ups on other avenues that came up during the interview. It should be considered that interviews provide perceived causal inferences (Yin, 2013:50). The researcher prepared an interview schedule to use for interviews. The schedule was divided into two sections (A and B). Section A contained the Biographical Information of the respondents, while Section B was about the questions that would help answer the research questions. Section B consisted of 14 questions to be answered. All expected respondents were interviewed. The researcher made appointments with each respondent and went to the places that were most comfortable for them. The interview involved the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between the researcher and each respondent. The interaction was recorded on a tape recorder.

### **3.8. DATA ANALYSIS**

After the researcher completed the process of collecting data from the sampled participants, the process of analysing data commenced. The data comprised of transcripts and audio recordings from the semi-structured interviews and notes from the observations and the documents analysed. Since the study was qualitative in nature, the qualitative data analysis methods were employed. The researcher used content analysis to analyse data. Berg (2007:303) describes content analysis as a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases and meanings. The results have been analysed and interpreted in chapter four.

#### **Document analysis**

Ritchie and Lewis (2011:35) describe document analysis as the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings which may be revealed by their style and coverage. Document analysis

denotes the analysis of any written material that contains information about the phenomenon that is being researched (de Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2011:376). The researcher requested the schools to give her the school safety policy, code of conduct for learners, records on daily incidents and disciplinary records and existing safety management strategies at school to go through them. The researcher analysed the documents differently according to their intended purposes. For the school safety policy, code of conduct of learners and the safety management strategies, the researcher employed the textual analysis technique. The emphasis was much on the interpretation of the meaning of each document. The researcher, then, used the content analysis technique to analyse the daily incidents and disciplinary records. This technique helped the researcher to assess the frequency of some incidences, as well as to whether such incidences are by boys or girls. The data collected was documented and used to conclude the research.

### **3.9. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

#### **3.9.1. Validity**

The concept of validity is concerned with just how accurately the observables measures actually represent the concept in question or whether, in fact, they represent something else. This means that the measuring instruments should measure what they are supposed to measure to avoid shortcomings (Welman, Kruger & Mitchel, 2005: 36). Validity emphasizes accuracy and truthfulness of the results of the study. The research was able to address validity through the use of three different methods of collecting data, honesty and objectivity. Credibility in a qualitative research is an internal validity that reflects how the research findings correspond to the reality of the investigated case. This study ensured credibility is achieved by conducting in-depth interviews with participants that voluntarily consented to partake in the study. The interviews enabled the researcher to gather as much information as possible, because respondents were able to discuss their views to a greater depth. For external validity, the researcher looked at transferability of the research findings. According to Creswell (2014: 4), transferability is comparable to external validity. Though transferability is considered to be a challenge in qualitative research due to its subjectivity, a qualitative researcher can enhance transferability by detailing the research methods, contexts and assumptions underlying the study, (Creswell 2014: 5). The researcher in this study

ensured that the views of the SGBs interviewed in Mamabolo circuit represent SGBs in other schools regarding the role of SGBs in promoting school safety. The researcher stated the number of schools that partook in the study. For the results of the study to be transferable, the researcher sampled three secondary schools and four primary schools based in the rural areas of Mamabolo so that the results can be relevant to any school in Mamabolo. The researcher further used different data collection tools that enabled her to harvest rich and quality data. Lastly, the researcher did a pilot testing on the data collection tool for interviews to ensure that all data can be captured without compromise due to time constraints.

### **3.9.2. Reliability**

Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:35) explain reliability as the extent to which the observable or empirical measures that represent a theoretical concept are accurate and stable when used for the concept in several studies. This means that the results of the study should present the real essence of people's feelings, such that if retested with the same measurement, they can yield the same outcome. Since it could be difficult to do that in a qualitative study, the researcher addressed reliability relating it to dependability and conformability of the findings. According to Merriam (2013: 4), dependability refers to the extent to which research can be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context. She further suggests that reliability in a qualitative study should be determined by whether the results are consistent with data collected. The researcher bore in mind the notion of transferability when dealing with data. A consent form was given to the participants to ensure that they are comfortable and provide reliable data. Review of literature was very helpful. The researcher also had to scrutinise the evidence to account for changing conditions with regard to safety in schools. The researcher further addressed reliability by looking for evidence to corroborate the findings and interpretations. This was done through auditing. According to Creswell (2014: 3), auditing refers to the researcher's documentation of data, methods and decisions made during a thesis as well as its end products. This requires that data and descriptions of the research be elaborated and enriched.

### **3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethics are concerned with whether the behaviours conform to a code or set of principles. Research ethics help to prevent research abuse and assists investigators



to understand their responsibilities as ethical scholars. Ethics place an emphasis on the humane and sensitive treatment of research participants (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013:28). Ethics describe what is and is not permissible to do when conducting a research (Kalof, Dan & Dietz, 2008:42). The researcher ensured that ethics were adhered to and that no respondent was forced into taking part in the study. All participants did so voluntarily. The following principles applied:

### **3.10.1.        *Honesty***

The researcher was honest about the purpose and process of the interview and about the way in which data was recorded. The data collected was neither falsified nor distorted. It was rather reported with great honesty.

### **3.10.2.        *Confidentiality***

Participants' identity and that of their schools were always kept confidential. The researcher assured the participants that the information they give would never be divulged to anyone unless it has been agreed upon. Interview records were stored in a safe place to ensure confidentiality as the sample size was small.

### **3.10.3.        *Permission to conduct the study***

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Limpopo, Limpopo Provincial Department of Education, Mamabolo Circuit as well as the selected schools.

### **3.10.4.        *Consent forms***

The researcher ensured that participants gave their consent to participate in the study. The researcher explained the nature of the study and the purpose thereof to the participants, and also what was expected from them. The researcher ensured that all misunderstandings were cleared by giving participants a chance to ask questions before the study could take place.

### **3.10.5.        *Rights of the participants***

The researcher informed the participants about the rights associated with the research, such as the right not to answer questions that they were not comfortable

with. The researcher made it her responsibility to protect the participants. Each participant chose a place which was most suitable and convenient where they would feel comfortable. The researcher informed the participants about their right to withdraw from the study if they felt that they no longer wanted to participate.

### **3.11. CONCLUSION**

When conducting this study, the researcher was faced with many challenges. One of the challenges was to obtain approval to conduct the research. The challenge was brought about by the time that the researcher requested the permission from the Department of Basic Education. It was during the last quarter of the year when schools were faced with examinations. The permission was granted on the condition that the study would not be undertaken during the fourth term of the academic year. The other challenge was that the time that was scheduled for data collection was also a busy time for schools. It had to be re-scheduled several times due to some urgent matters that were affecting the school. However, the research was eventually conducted successfully.

The use of semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis enabled the researcher to extract rich information. The researcher also used direct quotations from the respondents to ensure validity of the responses. Ethical considerations of informed consent, confidentiality and explanation of rights of participants earned the researcher trust from the respondents.

## **CHAPTER FOUR (DISCUSSION/PRESENTATION/INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS)**

### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

The processes of data collection and data analysis form a critical part of every research as they enable the researcher to come up with possible solutions to the problem investigated. The previous chapter discussed the way through which the processes were undertaken. This chapter presents an analysis and interpretation of data collected from the respondents. Methods employed to collect data varied from observations, interviews to document analysis.

In this study, seven schools were sampled from Mamabolo circuit. In each school the principal, SGB chairperson, and teacher component of the SGB were interviewed. At the circuit office, the Assistant Director for governance was interviewed.

Analysis of data was divided into three categories. Category A dealt with data from the semi-structured interviews, category B dealt with data from the observations and category C dealt with data from the documents. Data from category A was further divided into four sections. Section A dealt with data from the principals, section B data from SGB Chairpersons, section C data from the teachers, then section D dealt with data from the Assistant Director from the circuit office.

### **4.2. DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS**

#### *4.2.1. Gender*

A sample of twenty-two respondents was chosen for the semi-structured interviews. Two of those withdrew from the study resulting in twenty people being respondents. 60% of the respondents were males and 40% were females.

#### *4.2.2. Age*

75% of the respondents were aged between 46-65 years, 20% were aged between 36-45 years while 5% were aged 20-35 years.

#### *4.2.3. Years of experience in a position*

Reviewing the sample by years of experience in the positions, 40% of respondents had below five years' experience, 30% had between five and ten years' experience and 30% had above ten years' experience.

The demographical information was not expected to have any influence on the outcomes, but was included for statistical purposes.

### **4.3. FINDINGS**

#### **4.3.1. Findings from Semi-structured interview**

By means of open coding, the following themes emerged from the semi-structured interviews: understanding of school safety policy, importance of school safety policy, roles and responsibilities in the promotion of safety, involvement in school safety policy, training on school safety, meetings on school safety, systems/procedures to ensure promotion of school safety, correlation between safety policy and other governance systems, level of adherence and performance in relation to school safety policy, school safety policy and Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools, safe school, challenges faced when implementing school safety policy, and also ways to improve the promotion of safety.

For the purpose of anonymity and confidentiality, participants from all the schools were identified by pseudonyms as either Teacher (A-F), Principal of School (A-G) or Chairperson of school (A-G).

##### **a) Understanding of school safety policy**

Participants showed some understanding of what a school safety policy is, especially the principals and teachers. The researcher wanted to establish the participants' understanding of the school safety policy. One of the participants stated that he believed that all stakeholders within the parameters of the school must be safe. These included learners, teachers and non-educator staff.

The principals shared sentiments that a school safety policy governs the school on how to keep the school safe. Some referred to it as a policy that *"is developed to ensure safety within the school premises; in the classrooms and also beyond the classrooms."* Principal of school A referred to it as a guideline on how safety should be tackled at school.

Certain elements were mentioned as forming part of the school safety policy. Those elements included the following:

- Protection of all stakeholders in a school
- It should be guided by the departmental policies
- Hazard free physical environment
- It should address scholar transport

On the contrary, principal of school G indicated that though a school has to have a safety policy, it at times served no purpose. Some schools had policies, but did not implement them, while others were implementing things that were not documented.

However, some SGB chairpersons do not really know what school safety policy is about. What they agree upon is that a school should be a safe place, and that it is very important. One chairperson went to an extent of saying, *“we cannot talk about school safety policy because we do not have that safety in schools.”* Other chairpersons emphasised on their duties as members of SGB to ensure that safety is maintained. Such duties included ensuring that the walls are well maintained since there was a recent incident of a wall falling on learners and killing them.

The researcher also wanted to establish teachers’ understanding of school safety policy in their capacity as teacher representatives in SGBs. This policy was understood by some teachers as a document that indicated how schools should prevent injuries and fights. Two teachers indicated that it included the rules or guidelines that each learner and teacher would follow.

Teacher B said, “The policy should also indicate how the SGB will maintain the school buildings and how teachers and learners will be protected.” Teacher E added that SGB had a responsibility to ensure that the environment of the school was very safe. Hence, the development of this policy to ensure that schools did not “use common sense when dealing with safety issues.”

## **b) Importance of school safety policy**

According to the participants, a school safety policy serves different purposes. Each participant looked at this from the perspective of their role in the school. Principals looked at it from management perspective; teachers looked at it from the custodian

perspective while chairpersons looked at it from parents' perspective. Principals perceived the main reason for the implementation of this policy as for the protection of learners, teachers and everyone that entered the school. Principal of school D further believed that it would help attract the parents of learners that were not schooling at a particular school to bring their children to that school once they realised that the school takes safety issues seriously.

On the contrary, principal of school G believed that it was ideal for a safety policy to be implemented. He said, *"We need to implement it because we have an ideal school which shows that the school should be this way."*

Chairperson of school D believes that *"prevention is better than cure."* He believes that the policy will help prevent injuries as it will help them find learners who bring weapons to school and deal with them before they can harm others. Even though chairpersons could not understand what school safety policy is, one thing they were aware of was that it serves a very important role at school. To affirm that chairperson from school F added, *"The policy will help avoid hazards."*

In addition, chairperson from school B indicated that this policy is implemented to ensure that learners, teachers and other stakeholders or every person that entered the school were kept safe. Chairpersons from school A and C agreed that *"parents brought their children to school to learn."* So the learning and teaching of learners should be in a safe environment. Chairperson from school E, also stated that learners should go back home in a state in which they have left. Schools should ensure that safety.

Teachers explained the main reason for the implementation of this policy as to ensure safety of all in schools. One teacher indicated parents as another reason why schools implemented this policy. He said, *"Parents' expectation is that their children are safe at school at all costs."* Therefore, the schools had to come up with measures of how they were going to ensure that.

The same policy would be used to address learners who contravened safety measures. Teacher G added that should this policy not be drafted or be drafted and not implemented, schools might have regretful incidents.

The circuit office reiterated what the schools mentioned that they were experiencing a rise in violence amongst learners and the usage of drugs. Learners were said to be carrying dangerous weapons coming to school. Hence, this policy should be implemented to deal with that.

### **c) Roles and responsibilities in promoting safety**

The researcher realised a lot of confusion on this aspect. The roles of governance and that of management are intertwined. However, the teachers showed an understanding of their role in the SGB. According to SASA (Act 84 of 1996), a principal has the responsibility to help the SGB to know the school, to understand its role, to participate in functions assigned to it, to improve its abilities, and to promote the interest of the school. The circuit, as well, felt it was its responsibility to ensure that there was safety in schools. The participant indicated that he visited schools and addressed learners on safety issues and also asked police to address them. However, there were still some challenges with that collaboration.

It was clear from the principals' responses that some principals could not distinguish between their roles in governance and those in management. They find it hard to draw a line of separation between the roles. Principal of school D stated that he developed the policy then forwarded it to the SGB for approval. This showed the overlapping role functions of policy formulation by governance and policy implementation by management.

Some of the roles and responsibilities mentioned by principals included the following:

- Inducting the SGB to capacitate them as some have limited education on how to ensure safety
- Conscientize teachers about the departmental policies
- Identifying the needs of the policy
- Implementing the safety policy

On the other hand, principal in school B believed that since the school was a lower primary, the responsibilities were only to engage with parents so that they could check learners from home that they did not have weapons so as to reduce incidents that might happen.

Furthermore, other principals were not so clear what their responsibilities were with regard to safety in schools since they were not outlined to them. *“Not so clear because no one ever outlined what they are saying, regarding safety this is what you should do. I only talk to learners about safety at the assembly.”*

Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools allow police, principals or any person delegated by the principal to conduct random searches and seizures if there is a reasonable suspicion on safety being compromised. Hence, the SGBs indicated that they at times do so when they suspect foul play with learners.

To make schools safe, protecting both learners and teachers, SGB plays a vital role. Their responsibilities included from talking to learners about safety issues, to maintaining school property. Chairperson from school A stated that they dealt with learners that transgressed the safety rules according to their code of conduct. This included calling the parents of learners who contravened the code of conduct to address them. If learners continued with their behaviours, then they would be suspended for some time.

With regard to school property, chairperson from school E indicated that they ensured that there were no incidents that occurred at school when learners were playing. It could be from maybe holes around the school, disposed chairs and tables or any other hazard around the school. They also ensured that toilets are safe for learners' use. Chairperson from school B added that they have agreed with the parents that learners should be searched at the gate to ensure that there are no dangerous weapons that come to school.

The SGBs felt they were doing the best they could under the given circumstances they find themselves and in light of available resources.

The main responsibility of teachers in SGB was said to be teacher representatives in the body. Teachers agreed that teacher component of the SGB represented the views of teachers. Teacher E stated that safety issues that were met in classes were reported to the SGB teacher component who then forwarded them to the SGB. He said, *“I serve as a link between teachers and parents.”*

Teacher B and teacher D added that their other responsibility was to ensure that classrooms were safe for teaching and learning. Teacher A on the other hand



indicated his involvement as the chairperson of disciplinary committee as *“responsible for calling to order those that are out of order.”*

#### **d) Involvement in school safety policy**

It is clear from the literature that schools are highly regulated environments and the implementation of policies left sometimes a little room for discretion by principals. Principals indicated that they were involved in all stages from formulation to review. Their involvement included the following:

- a. Policy formulation
  - Provision of guidance to SGB by searching for information pertaining to safety of learners
  - Ensuring that the policy is drafted in line with the national policies
- b. Policy implementation
  - Principals are members of safety committee as ex-officio
  - Working in collaboration with safety committee chairperson to ensure safety is promoted
  - Ensuring that every activity in school promote safety, e.g. learners should lock their classrooms before leaving the school
  - Giving marching orders to learners at assembly
  - Calling the police to school to reduce the number of incidents that might happen
  - Ensuring compliance with regard to safety policy
- c. Policy review
  - Ensuring that the agreements in the policy are being implemented without any deviation
  - Ensuring that learners’ safety is not compromised in any way and that it is according to the policy as drafted

Principal of school E added that as a key person at school, he had an influence on what should be added in the policy. In addition, the principal of school B indicated that as an accounting officer, her involvement in policy formulation was to guide the parents since many of them had limited knowledge on policy matters.

All the chairpersons indicated that they were not involved in the formation of the school safety policies. Some reasons stated include the time they spent in the body. Chairperson from school B had only three months in the body. She found systems running. One chairperson indicated that she did not remember being involved in any way in the school safety policy. This showed the lack of knowledge that some SGB chairpersons might be having with regard to their roles in the school.

Much involvement was shown during the implementation of the safety policy. Chairperson from school F indicated that they “*seek guidance from other neighbouring schools to learn how safety issues are addressed. The SGB, together, with the parents decide on what could be done to deal with safety issues at school*”. In addition, the SGBs engaged the police to come and deal with safety matters.

Participants were asked about their involvement in the school safety policy. Some teachers indicated their involvement during formulation of the policy. Teacher B stated that she forwarded teachers’ suggestions and ideas to the SGB so that it would be easy for teachers during implementation. On the other hand, teacher E indicated that the major role he played as the secretary of the SGB was as a scribe of what had been agreed upon. Other teachers indicated that they were not involved during policy formulation.

During implementation of the policy, teachers were involved in several ways. Almost all teachers were involved in implementing the rules as outlined in the policy. Two teachers indicated that they chaired the disciplinary committee. Their responsibilities included reminding every person how to ensure safety, as well as ensuring that policy was adhered to.

On the other hand, teacher G indicated that he was not part of policy formulation because the policy had been there for long. He only tried to implement it. He said, “*The policy is reviewed yearly but no amendments are made.*”

Only one teacher indicated that she was involved at all in the school safety policy since there was a safety committee that was handling safety matters.

#### **e) Training on school safety**

When asked about their attendance of any training on safety matters, most participants stated that they had never attended any training. One principal indicated that there was a programme for training in safety by the department. However, they were not trained. She said, *“Principals were called to a meeting then information was circulated that principals should sign then training will be provided later. That training never happened. We were told it was a departmental mandate that we sign.”*

Only one principal indicated that he attended an induction from the governance section in the circuit office, and also the workshops arranged by the District office on how to keep the schools safe to avoid legal consequences. Principal of school E added that their training was arranged by the school since the circuit promised to provide training and never did. The school had a workshop by an officer from Polokwane municipality who trained them on security measures that might be detrimental to safety such as how to avoid trap. They also had training on fire by their supplier of fire extinguishers.

Principal of school G further indicated that a request was made to the circuit that they arrange training with Polokwane municipality’s fire section to come and workshop them on how to use the fire extinguishers they have at school, but it was never done. The education system is failing the principals on matters of safety. Principal of school A also indicated that they just go through the departmental policies and implement what they understand.

On the other hand, SGB felt that they did not have the capacity to address safety issues at school.

Only one chairperson had received training in safety issues. The training was provided by the Polokwane Municipality because he is the Ward Councillor. The training was about how to deal with safety issues relating to the fence, toilets and surfacing or landscaping of the school. It was in a form of a workshop.

All other chairpersons had never received training with regard to safety issues at school. *“As parents, we just know what dangers children may be exposed to, but there was no training provided.”* The workshops that SGBs attended, which were organised by the circuit office were not specifically about safety, but on how the schools should be governed.

The first teacher was trained on how to use the fire extinguishers and what to do in case of fire emergency. However, no certification was provided; either for competence or participation. The second teacher attended a session where the principal was explaining what was learned in her workshop. Otherwise, she learned from what the police and nurses said when they addressed learners.

However, the circuit office disputed the claims by the schools on training. With regard to training on safety issues at schools, the participant indicated that training was provided to all SGB stakeholders. It conducted workshop for RCLs on bullying and also a workshop for SGBs on safety.

However, safety meetings were held only once a year since much priority was on curriculum matters.

#### **f) Meetings on school safety**

Participants were asked to indicate how often they held meetings to address safety issues at school. Principals confirmed what the SGB said about not having meetings on safety. Safety is treated as an item with the agenda for SGB meetings. Two principals indicated that they only held safety meetings whenever there was a need. The reasons cited were that they did not have a safety committee and that they handled situations as they occurred.

The frequency of meetings held varied from school to school. In one school safety meetings were never held. The chairperson indicated that it was because "*most families were related to one another in the village, so they know each other*" hence, they do not see a need to hold a safety meeting because learners will not hurt one another.

Others held meetings once a month, twice a month or four times a year. One thing common about these meetings was that the meetings were not specifically about safety, but safety was an item within the agenda for the day. A specific safety meeting was held only when a need arose. That would be after an incident had occurred.

#### **g) Systems/procedures to ensure promotion of school safety**

Numerous systems/procedures were identified as being in place at the schools to address safety issues. However, two chairpersons indicated that there were no

systems in place to ensure safety. They cited the reasons for that as lack of finance. Chairperson from school C indicated that they used to have a security officer, but he left after he was attacked at night. The systems/procedures put in place at schools included the following:

- The involvement of the Community Policing Forum (CPF) to provide some workshop for learners on safety matters,
- Locking the gate to control access to the school,
- CCTV cameras and alarm systems,
- Volunteers and Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) personnel who take care of the school surroundings,
- Learners were not allowed to go out of the school yard throughout the school hours,
- Ensuring that the school premises were clear of dangerous objects, e.g. old chairs and desks
- Signage of what is prohibited in the school yard
- Police coming to school on quarterly basis to conduct random searches and seizures
- Establishment of safety committees by the SGBs
- Learners' workshops on learner conduct; and also
- Parents signing the code of conduct for learners at the beginning of the year
- Other systems/procedures included random searches by the SGB to ensure that learners do not bring dangerous weapons and also that their bags carry only the school books, parents searching their children when they left home, random searches conducted by police officer on a quarterly basis, workshop for learners on their conduct. If learners were found with any of the prohibited items, such items were confiscated and disciplinary actions taken against those learners.
- Teacher E stated that they also had a security officer that controlled access to the school. The officer was funded by the Non-Governmental Organisation in the community. The school had also decided to pave the entire school because it was a rocky surface and when it rained, the rocks became sharpened and they could be detrimental to the safety of learners.

## **h) Correlation between safety policy and other governance systems**

Participants were asked whether there was a correlation between the school safety policy and other governance systems in the schools. In their capacity as process managers, principals are expected to establish, maintain, monitor and evaluate all governance processes to sustain the operations in schools. Principals were asked about the synergy between the safety policy and other governance systems in schools. All of them acknowledged that governance systems could not operate in isolation of safety policy. Principal of school F said, *“There are governance committees within the SGB that deals with other activities such as finance committee. The SGB follows the departmental prescripts.”*

On the contrary, principal of school G further stated that understanding of the correlation between safety policy and other governance systems required people with a high level of knowledge in their functions. *“The SGB relies solely on the principal. They do not question anything that the principal says.”*

On the other hand, it was highlighted that other external stakeholders were reluctant to assist when school requested assistance with safety issues. Principal of school E indicated the following, *“The Department of Transport categorically refused to assist with speed- humps until a learner was knocked down by a car in front of the school.”*

In addition, principals indicated that there were governance committees responsible for different functions within the SGB. The SGBs were said to be following departmental prescripts.

Chairperson of school B indicated that they do not have a safety policy. They only have a general school policy which does not address safety issues.

Almost all the chairpersons could not relate safety policy with any other system of governance. Only one chairperson tried to relate safety with finance indicating that *“when there is a need for repair or maintenance of buildings, a meeting is convened with the finance committee to request funds for maintenance.”*

On the other hand, the chairperson of school C indicated that they only come to school when called by the school, while the chairperson of school C stated that they relied much on the principal.

It is disconcerting that most chairpersons and teachers could not relate safety with any other governance system. This has a direct bearing on the involvement of the SGB in the school safety measures. Only one teacher indicated that they were practising safety when admitting learners, but could not clearly stipulate how they did so. However, all schools had disciplinary committees that dealt with conduct of learners. Teacher A only understood that the SGB as the highest decision making body in the school should ensure safety of everybody in the school.

#### **i) Level of adherence and performance in relation to school safety policy**

Participants agreed that the level of adherence to safety policy was satisfactory, even though there were still some isolated cases of possession of weapons by learners. In the contrary, the principal of school F indicated that there were numerous cases of theft, bullying, and drugs due to unavailability of security officers.

Principals indicated that their performance in terms of safety was still viewed as better, compared to other schools because they have not experienced severe cases like those they hear of in the media and other neighbouring schools. Principals in primary schools stated that they could still manage to control safety around the schools. However, principals from secondary schools were experiencing cases of gangsterism, bullying and continuous fights amongst learners. Nonetheless, they worked together with police and Community Policing Forums (CPF) to help improve safety status in the schools.

Members of SGB were asked to indicate the level of adherence to safety policy and that of overall performance in terms of safety at school. They indicated that their schools have high level of adherence to safety policy. They compared their schools with those that they hear of regarding other schools. They have never experienced serious cases that may lead to fatalities. That made them state that theirs are highly safe. On the contrary, chairperson of school A indicated that though learners adhere to safety policy, they still face challenges from learners who transferred from other schools.

All chairpersons stated that learners have been provided with the learners' code of conduct which indicated the expected behaviour from learners. However, chairperson

from school G indicated that much adherence to safety is from the teachers' side. *"Learners persist in bringing dangerous weapons and drugs that are prohibited."*

Nevertheless, schools try to keep the gates locked to control movement in and out of the school. Teachers and classroom monitors also monitor if any learner might be having prohibited weapons or substances, then they report to the disciplinary committee.

Teacher B indicated that they could manage to control learners because they were from rural areas. In addition, teacher E stated that despite having received no training on safety, the school was trying to manage safety. He said, *"We are not there yet, but the little we are doing is going in the right direction."*

In most cases, adherence to safety was in comparison with other schools. Teacher A said, *"When we interact with other teachers we learn that our school is still better because things that are happening in other schools are very bad."*

Teacher E indicated that learners in their school were not allowed to get out of the yard. When a parent was looking for a learner, procedures were followed to screen the parent before the learner could leave.

According to the records that schools submitted at the circuit office, there was a good level of adherence to safety. However, there were isolated incidents. The participant said, *"One major incident was that of learners of a secondary school where they were gambling at the gate of the school. Things got out of hand and one learner was stabbed to death."*

#### **j) School Safety Policy and Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools**

Principals were asked whether the implementation of safety policy was in line with the Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools. The principals indicated the following:

- Schools had partnerships with the police that came for random searches and the CPF that came to address learners on issues of safety,
- Displayed signage indicating the things that are prohibited in schools,



- Night patrollers camped at some schools to ensure safety at night
- Fire extinguishers were available in some schools in case of fire emergency

However, one principal indicated that even though they have such relationships with police, their level of responsiveness is not satisfactory. He said, *“During a burglary at school one night at school, police were called and they only came after 48 hours. Patrollers also do not do it regularly because they are not paid. They exist only on paper, but practically are not there.”*

On the other hand, all chairpersons did not know what these regulations were about. The researcher had to explain the contents of the regulations before the participants could be able to relate.

Two chairpersons indicated that there was lack of police visibility in their schools. *“The police are only called when there is a need.”* Nonetheless, all other chairpersons stated that they have a strong relationship with the Community Policing Forums and other civic organisations in their communities. On the contrary, chairperson of school D indicated that meetings with the police are held more often. They even address learners on issues pertaining to safety.

Almost all the teachers affirmed what the principals had said that they had a strong relationship with the CPF. Teacher A added that one of the SGB members in their school was a member of the CPF in their community. Teacher D indicated that they also called police on regular basis to address learners on issues of safety. However, the response from the circuit office was not satisfied with the level of co-operation from the police. Meetings were held with police, but they did not adhere to the agreements. It could be clearly understood from this response that the South African Police Services (SAPS) members did not comply with the regulations by working in partnership with schools.

On the contrary, teacher B stated that their policy was tailor-made looking at the needs of the school. Some of the measures mentioned in the regulations were not implemented. In addition, schools have boards at the gate that indicate the things that are prohibited in schools, but in some isolated cases learners are still found with weapons and drugs, especially in secondary schools.

#### **k) Safe school**

The understanding on what constitutes a safe school yielded different ideas. One thing in common in their responses was that a safe school should be protective of learners. Section 24(1) and Section 28(1) of the **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996** (South Africa, 1996:11) provide that “*everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being*” and that every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. The principals were asked what, in their view, constituted a safe school. Different views were provided, but one thing that principals had in common has been that access to school should be controlled at all times. Principal of school A emphasized the need to have security personnel who would search every person that entered the school premises.

Other characteristics of a safe school included the following:

- Safe infrastructure
- Exemplary teachers who do not smoke publicly in front of learners
- High quality fencing and gates
- Frequent visits by health inspectors since there was food kept in schools
- CCTV cameras and alarm systems to reinforce security
- Weapons-free and drugs-free environment
- Surroundings should be suitable for young learners
- Strong fence and gate
- Should be monitored all the time
- Availability of security guards

Furthermore, the principal of school F indicated that a safe school is able to manage and resolve its cases. She said, “*We cannot say a safe school is the one which does not experience unsafe incidents but the one which has minimal incidents and is able to resolve the cases when they arise.*”

In finding out the level of awareness of the SGB chairpersons in what constitutes a safe school, the researcher found that the chairpersons relate safety at schools with mainly the protection of learners. The responses included the respect of learners towards teachers, teaching and learning taking place in danger-free and weapon-free environments.

Little was said about the safety of the school environment. Chairperson from school A only mentioned that *“a safe school is where walls are not cracked.”* Much emphasis was based on having an access controlled entrance. According to chairperson of school E, that would help avoid child/learner trafficking.

Teachers described a safe school in many ways. Some indicated that it was an environment where learning and teaching were promoted.. Other descriptors included the following:

On the other hand, teacher B stated that people should feel free to come to school. *“However, no school is a safe school.”*

### **I) Challenges faced when implementing school safety policy**

Creating a safe physical environment involves ensuring that buildings, grounds and safety systems are safe and secure. The principal of school D stated his challenges related to this as the surfacing of the school environment. He indicated that it was sloppy and soil erosion happened every time it rained. He once fell and got hurt.

On the other hand, principal of school G indicated lack of support from Limpopo Department of Basic Education. The researcher was shown all the efforts that the principal made to get the department to demolish the unsafe old buildings at the school, where the department never responded until the parents took it upon themselves to demolish those buildings. Despite those efforts by parents, the department had not removed the rubble from those buildings.

Numerous challenges were provided, the dominant of which was the unavailability of security personnel due to lack of funds. The chairpersons indicated that even though they try to promote safety, access to school is still a challenge because there is no one at the gate to control it.

Some of the challenges highlighted included lack of parental commitment to safety at schools. Chairperson from school D stated that parents were reluctant to attend school meetings when called and also that they should start practising safety at home as *“charity begins at home.”* This contributed to the disobedience by learners. No matter how much it was emphasized that weapons and drugs were prohibited, learners still

brought them. The older learners in higher grades give all these things to the lower grades. That happened mostly in secondary schools.

In addition, chairperson of school G cited size of the school as a challenge. She indicated that some schools have few learners so the government could not give them a security officer while funding from the department was not enough to cover that.

Other challenges included learners who were continually fighting over petty things. They then end up bringing weapons to protect themselves. Most of such learners were those that were expelled from other schools and then they register in another.

Challenges that teachers and principals agree on as associated with the implementation of safety policy included the following:

- Young parents who were not co-operative
- Unavailability of security guards
- Lack of parental involvement in discipline of learners
- Limited powers of the SGB such as the powers to expel learners
- Parents did not accept any form of discipline on their childrenUnavailability of parents when matters of safety were dealt with. Parents did not attend the meetings when invited,
- Theft of food. Food, in some schools, was now kept in store rooms with no ventilation
- Funding for security officers. Community members were reluctant to serve for free as the department did not make provision for remuneration of security officers in the Norms and Standards for School Funding
- Teachers who were not exemplary. Teachers smoked publicly in front of learners.
- Learners from child-headed families and neglected learners. These learners experienced discipline for the first time at school and found it hard to accept.
- Lack of knowledge on safety matters
- Late pick-up of learners by their transports

#### **m) Ways to improve the promotion of safety**

With regard to what should be done to improve the promotion of safety in schools, principals mentioned a number of ways. Principals acknowledged that improving school safety would not be an overnight activity, but with commitment from all stakeholders involved, it could be successful.

The SGB chairpersons suggested number of ways that could help improve the promotion of safety in schools. They emphasised the visibility of police in schools. Chairperson of school C emphasized the deployment of police in schools because even when drugs were not sold in schools, there were people from outside the schools providing those drugs to learners.

The chairpersons felt that there was a need for the Limpopo Department of Basic Education to provide security personnel or at least allow for the utilization of the Norms and Standards for School Funding to cater for the provision of security officers.

There was also a suggestion that the communities be involved in school safety issues to at least meet the schools' half-way in funding for the provision of security officers.

Some of the ways suggested included the following:

- Each school should have a police officer adopting it. Teacher E believed that would make it easier for schools to cascade and receive information from the police
- Provision of trained security officers by the Department of Basic Education to minimize the incidents, especially those of parents confronting teachers, and also that visitors would be checked Alternatively, the Department could allow the schools to use the funds to hire guards to secure the gates. Allocation of security personnel in schools
- Allocation of funds to improve food storages and school kitchenettes
- Regulated scholar transport to ensure safety of learners
- Involvement of all stakeholders, e.g. teachers being exemplary and parents being part of discipline from home
- Training teachers on safety
- Effective monitoring by department after training
- Capacitating SGBs on fundraising so that they could be able to raise funds for schools to supplement what the department is providing

- Community meetings should address school safety
- Schools within the circuit should work collaboratively to come up with strategies on how to deal with safety

#### **4.3.2. Findings from observations**

The researcher managed to observe either the commencement of the school activities or the end thereof, and learned that most learners used scholar transport to and from the school. The researcher, however, realised that many cars that are used are not passenger cars, but goods cars.

At the entrance of each school, the researcher observed that the mission and vision of the schools are clearly displayed. However, in some schools, the writings are fading away due to the exposure to the harsh weather conditions. There was no signage concerning the visitors' policy and trespassing properly displayed at the entrances of schools. In all the schools visited, the researcher learned that there are no emergency exits and emergency assembly points. This poses a risk to the school community, should there be an emergency. Learners will run around the school not knowing where to go.

In addition, some schools had either an abandoned building or abandoned mobile classes. The walls were however not damaged. The SGBs managed to maintain the conditions of the windows and doors with an exception of one school which had many windows and doors broken.

The researcher found two schools with a construction underway, but no precautionary measures were taken to safeguard the protection of learners. Learners were exposed to contact with bricks that were being used. Some schools had the electrical wires, plugs and sockets open. Those that had them secured still left the distribution boards in an unlocked socket. Learners could have access to the distribution boards. Some wires were hanging from the roofs as some schools' ceilings were damaged. This might cause electrocution if learners get into contact.

Some of the schools did not have fire extinguishers to use in case of fire. Those that did were out of service. Some were last serviced about two to fifteen years ago. Only one school had fire extinguishers that were up-to-date. Furthermore, there were no

hose pipes or fire detectors as alternatives to be used in case of fire. The researcher also found that the schools used open fire to prepare food for the learners. Only two learners used gas to supplement the open fire. In all the schools visited, there were no fire extinguishers in the fire place. Access to water was also not readily available. They had to find the hose pipe first.

Only one school had a science laboratory. However, the school had no personal protective equipment like safety glasses, hand gloves, respiratory masks, lab coats and rubber boots to use in the laboratory. The laboratory floor was damaged by the chemicals, while the level of ventilation was not enough.

Other observations made include the use of pit toilets in some schools, evidence of smoking in the toilets, and exposure to harm since playing grounds were not well maintained. The playgrounds were either bushy or had stones scattered around. Some schools exposed learners to the dangers such as being bitten by snakes since due to the bushes or rubbles around the school or within the school yard. Broken chairs and tables were also found scattered around some schools.

Furthermore, some schools were built in areas that were not safe for young children. The landscaping is either not good or the school is in a mountainous area where there are rocks within the school. Although the SGBs had tried to secure the schools with fences, learners, especially in some secondary schools found a way of dismantling the fences to create holes to use whenever they dodged lessons.

#### **4.3.3. Findings from documents**

The researcher scrutinised different documents from the schools. Schools did not have safety policies. They only had school policies that are silent on the issues of safety. So, the researcher analysed other documents. All schools had the disciplinary or incidents register, as well as the learners' code of conduct.

##### **a) *Learners' code of conduct***

Some of the learners' code of conduct seemed to have been adopted more for compliance than for enforcement. Though they were just few pages, they tried to categorise the misconducts according to the level of severity. However, some codes of conduct did not outline the procedure to be followed in case of misconduct. They

only indicated that sanctions will be applied according to **South African Schools Act** (Act 84 of 1996). Only one school outlined the procedure to be followed.

The researcher discovered that the procedure followed in practice during misconduct does not correspond with the documented procedures. In all the schools, parents of the learners who transgressed the code of conduct were called to the school, and then the matter was documented in the disciplinary records. No learner has ever faced the correct sanction for their misconducts according to the documented procedures. All learners were treated the same irrespective of the misconduct. Only one school went to an extent of suspending a learner for few days for misconduct.

**South African Schools Act**, (Act 84 of 1996) makes provision for suspension and expulsion of learners following a fair hearing, in a case of serious misconduct. Such conducts were documented, but the procedures were not followed to deal with them accordingly.

In addition, the researcher discovered that in all the schools, the learners' code of conduct only addresses the negative or unacceptable behaviour. Nothing is said about the reward for good and acceptable behaviour. It seemed as if the schools are advocating for unacceptable behaviour only. No positive behaviour is fostered.

#### **b) *Incidents register and disciplinary records***

The incidents recorded differ according to the school level. In primary schools most incidents relate to the SGBs function of maintaining the schools' property where learners have broken the windows. However, there are some elements of assault, coming to school under the influence of drugs and also possession of weapons. Severe incidents recorded at primary schools are minimal compared to those at secondary schools. In most cases, primary school learners use their stationery as weapons or drugs. The researcher learned that some learners use scissors, mathematical apparatus as weapons, and also the glue in the stationery pack as a drug.

The incidents found in the secondary schools included possession of weapons, possession of drugs and alcohol, use and selling of drugs, use of dangerous weapons, use of alcohol and assault. Some of the fights are a continuation of what happened at home while others are fuelled by the level of gangsterism in schools.



Schools maintain incidents registers to record the incidents as they occur and also the disciplinary records to document learners that faced disciplinary actions. Only one school had no incidents register, but records the incidents in the school journal. The information that is recorded in schools was not reflected by the information submitted to the circuit office. The schools submit 'nil reports' to the circuit, yet their incident registers and disciplinary records contain lots of information.

There is no evidence of action plans for dealing with safety threats. Learners resort to their own methods of safeguarding their protection. Unfortunately, the methods used perpetuate the safety threats. Learners bring pepper sprays and dangerous weapons to schools to use for self-defence and end up using them on innocent learners in an act of bullying.

#### **4.4. CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the responses of principals, teachers and chairpersons to semi-structured interviews. Data from these interviews was on their roles as School Governing Body members. Profiles of participants focused on gender, age and position held in the SGB. Most of the findings corroborated one another. Analysis of the responses to the semi-structured interviews revealed that knowledge of SGB on safety is questionable.

## **CHAPTER FIVE (SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS)**

### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a summary of the study, recommendations based on the research findings and the conclusions drawn from the research findings. The outline of these conclusions and recommendations would enable the relevant stakeholders to address some of the concerns related to the functioning of SGBs in relation to promoting safety in schools. The conclusions and recommendations were made in relation to the research question(s), aim and study objectives.

### **5.2. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The study was aimed at assessing the role that SGBs have to play in ensuring safety enhancement in selected schools of the Mamabolo circuit, Mankweng cluster, Limpopo province, South Africa. The motivation to conduct this study was derived from the on-going reports of school violence. Media reports increasingly indicated that safety at schools has been compromised as learners and teachers were exposed to violence and even worse, death. Having witnessed a violent activity at the school I was working in, the researcher was therefore motivated to conduct a study on the role that the SGBs can play in implementing a safety policy in schools. Through a qualitative approach, the study has generated in-depth data from the 20 participants that were purposefully sampled. There are four findings that emanated from the data namely; understanding of school safety policies, insufficient knowledge on SGB roles and responsibilities, the status of safety in schools, as well as the need for Department of education to support schools and SGBs.

The results from the present study, specifically, the synergy between implementation of safety policy and analysis of demographics; in particular, the number of years in SGBs, revealed that the more people served in the SGBs, the more they understand their functions in relation to safety. This was to be expected since experience can be associated with better risk management.

#### **5.2.1. School Safety policies**

The participants indicated that they do know what a school safety policy should entail, however they are unable to develop the policies on their own.

It is further revealed that some schools do not have the safety policies. Those that have, policies have been there since the start of the operation of the school or the commencement of that particular principal's management career. In essence, it is discovered that SGBs struggle with formulation of policies. Thus, it will be difficult for them to implement what they do not know. According to Liphapang (2014: 13), having a policy on paper is desirable, but giving skills to those who must implement the policy is best. Liphapang (2014: 14) further notes that a policy does not only show intent, but it is a guideline that commits the school to a particular standpoint. Some principals lack the capacity to implement policies. SGB chairpersons indicate that they rely on the principals and teachers for professional guidance. Moreover, they are not capacitated and knowledgeable on these matters. The chairpersons lack a point of reference. This therefore, calls for capacity building by the Department of Basic Education.

The researcher realised that most schools did not have the safety policies. These schools are vulnerable to safety threats. In addition, the schools that operate without safety policies can be perceived as being negligent on safety matters. However, a question might be asked as to how they would know if they have not been trained, like it is the case in some schools currently.

### **5.2.2. Knowledge of SGB roles and responsibilities**

The findings revealed that the SGBs are not sure what their roles and responsibilities are with regard to safety policy, be it development or implementation. This coincides with Mestry and Khumalo (2012: 108) views that SGBs have difficulties regarding the design and enforcement of learners' code of conduct. On the other hand, SGBs are aware that school property is their prerogative, however, they are afraid to make certain decisions without the affirmation of the school principal. There is confusion on who is responsible for academic, professional matters and who is responsible for governance issues. This affirms the claim by Xaba (2011: 202), which denotes that schools are faced with numerous governance challenges, which seem to be related with the schools governors' ability or inability to execute functions as prescribed by **South African Schools Act**, (Act no 84 of 1996). Findings also revealed that principals took it upon themselves to develop the policies and gave to the SGBs to adopt. However, one can understand since principals show better knowledge of

policies than the SGBs. At the same time, principals are concerned with the management of the day-to-day implementation of policies. Lack of sufficient training to SGBs on their clear roles with regards to safety in schools, may have been at the centre of the SGBs confusion on which function to execute. Thus, a conclusion that SGBs are barely succeeding in facing the challenges of their roles and responsibilities.

These results signal the need for the Limpopo department of education to provide sufficient training to the SGBs, especially the parent component of the body.

### **5.2.3. Status of safety in schools**

The study revealed that schools have some unsafe elements. Though the elements have not yet resulted in fatalities, if they are left unattended, they may bring dire results. In this study, it was found that learners bring to school weapons such as knives. In other instances, stationery such as scissors, are used as weapons. This confirms the findings on the study by Debusho (2017: 79) in the neighbouring circuit which revealed that weapons such as knives and sharpened objects are brought to schools by learners. Debusho (2017: 80) further indicates that anything at the learners' disposal can be used as a weapon. This includes broken chairs, broken glasses, etc. Hence, the researcher in this study found it to be risky for the school to have many broken chairs and desks.

In most cases, these weapons are brought to school as a means of protection during fights. This gives a negative feedback about the status of safety in the schools. It shows that illegal weapons are brought to school; either for protection or the fights.

There are some measures that are put in place to ensure safety. However, lack of training in SGBs results in many of them not knowing what to do should safety intervention be needed. The data from the documents analysed revealed that schools encounter many safety threatening incidents. Though parents are called to help deal with the challenges, the incidents are persistent. The researcher has therefore concluded that further intervention from the Limpopo Department of Basic Education and other external stakeholders is needed to address the issue. The **Regulations for Safety Measures at all Public Schools** (R1040, 2001, Paragraph 4.3), makes provision for the involvement of external stakeholders such as the police to assist the schools in ensuring that safety is maintained.

#### **5.2.4. The need for Limpopo Department of education to support SGBs**

Though it can be argued that training cannot be the only way which can help improve the SGBs ability to deal with their roles and responsibilities, it can be equally accepted that it has the capacity to enhance understanding of roles pertaining to safety in schools. Most of the participants have never attended any training on issues relating to their role in promoting safety. This implies that SGBs rely on their own understanding of how safety should be ensured. It can have dire consequences that might even be unlawful.

Xaba (2011: 201) states that the SGBs are not trained before they start their role as governors and this manifests in problems such as being unfamiliar with meeting procedures, not knowing how to make a contribution and not knowing appropriate legislation. Mestry & Khumalo (2012: 109) add that lack of knowledge of legislation and training militates against the ability of the SGB to perform functions such as the adoption and implementation of the learners' code of conduct. The **South African Schools Act**, (Act 84 of 1996), mandates the Provincial Education Departments to appropriate money for the training of SGBs.

It has been mentioned by most participants that the shortage of security personnel at school poses a risk on school safety. This confirms the study by Debusho (2017: 75) which found that many schools which fall in the same cluster as Mamabolo Circuit have no security guards. Sinthumule & Tsanwani (2017: 179) add that the advocacy of security guards to maintain discipline in schools and to help eliminate school-based violence should not be underestimated. The above arguments amplify the evidence that schools need security personnel to help ensure a safe environment for effective teaching and learning.

#### **5.2.5. Recommendations**

From the findings of the research conducted at Mamabolo circuit, a recommendation is therefore made that there is a need for the Limpopo Department of Basic Education to ensure that there is effective participation of SGBs in the promotion of safety in schools. School safety plays a vital role in the teaching and learning process. There are a number of things that the Department of Basic Education and the SGBs can do to enhance safety in schools. Some of those aspects are discussed below:

- Replace the glue that is part of the stationery packaging with a pritt stick since it is used as a drug by older learners
- Parents should be involved in the development of safety policies. This will enable them to take ownership of the disciplinary actions against any offenders in the schools. It will also help enhance trust amongst the school community.
- The provincial government needs to further evaluate and address the systematic reasons for failures by the schools, subsequently circuits.
- The Department of Basic Education should capacitate the principals on labour and policy matters to enable them to develop school policies.
- Although safety is a competency of various departments, including police, most schools have minimal skills and capacity to implement that mandate. The provincial government should therefore ensure that the SGBs perform their functions and responsibilities effectively, including collaboration with South African Police Services (SAPS).
- The Department of Basic Education should thoroughly train SGB members on issues of safety every three years when the SGB cycle commences
- Each circuit should have a safety officer that will deal with safety issues relating to schools
- The circuit should design a common safety policy for its schools and distribute for schools to amend according to their needs and experiences
- The code of conduct for learners must be made part of the SA-SAMS admission forms that each parent and learner signs
- Code of conduct for learners should be signed at the beginning of the year
- The Department should make its assets disposal management flexible such that schools can dispose of the broken chairs and tables much easier
- The buildings that have been there for more than 30 years need to be inspected for safer use
- The SGBs should ensure that the playing grounds for learners are free of hazards
- The Department must avail a certain portion of the Norms and Standards for Funding for public Schools for minor infrastructure maintenance
- Training of teachers from institutions of higher learning should include how to manage safety

### **5.3. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

It is suggested that further research be conducted on the following topics:

- The training of School Governing Bodies on school safety
- The effectiveness of the code of conduct for learners in promoting safety
- Parental involvement in the promotion of safety in schools
- The role of police in promoting school safety

### **5.4. CONCLUSION**

This study was set out to investigate the role that the School Governing Bodies play in the implementation of school safety policy in the Mamabolo circuit, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Although school safety is a worldwide phenomenon, the study has indicated that the School Governing Bodies find it difficult to execute their function of ensuring safety in schools. In some schools, they have even failed to develop the same policy that they have to use to ensure safety. According to schools, incidents refer to the fatalities that may occur at school. Minor safety incidents are not regarded as incidents; hence they do not submit such to the circuit office.

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## ANNEXURES

### ANNEXURE A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE - SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

<p><b>Name of Interviewee:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Date of Interview:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Contact Number:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Email:</b> _____</p>
--

Dear Participant,

My name is **Aletta Mohlala**, an MPAM student at Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership (TGSL), University of Limpopo.

I am carrying out a study on the School Safety Policy as implemented by the School Governing Body in the Mamabolo Circuit, Limpopo Province.

The purpose of this interview is to obtain information from members involved with this policy at these schools.

The responses will enable the researcher to analyse, conclude and recommend improvements to school safety. The responses from all respondents will be treated as confidential.

**NOTE:** *In the event where you consider the questions to be in any way inappropriate or of a prejudiced nature, you are entitled to refrain from proffering a response or to discontinue the interview.*

*You will be requested to fill consent forms (attached):*

- **Informed Consent Form**
- **Final Consent Form**

**The interview guide is divided into two sections:**

**Section A:** Biographical Information; and

**Section B:** Questions as per the objectives of the study as well as additional pertinent aspects relating to the School Safety Policy

**SECTION A: Biographical information – indicate with a ✓ where applicable**

**1. Gender:**

Male		Female	
------	--	--------	--

**2. Age Range:**

20-35		36-45		46-65	
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**3. Position held**

Principal	
SGB Teacher Component	
SGB Chairperson	
Assistant Director- Governance	

**4. Number of years in the position:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **SECTION B**

**B.1. The interviewer will relay the following information to the interviewee:**

**1. Title of the research project:**

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

**2. Key Words – Interviewer to explain the key words to the interviewee**

- Policy
- Safety
- Effectiveness

### 3. Problem Statement

According to the **South African Schools Act**, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), the SGB should maintain and improve the schools' property. Therefore, The Department of Education asserts that it is committed to providing a (physical) environment for the delivery of quality teaching and learning by promoting the rights and safety of all learners, educators and parents. Hence, the SGB should play a vital role in promoting safety in schools.

The main problem is that media reports are increasingly questioning the Department's record to ensuring safety in schools.

### 4. Research Objectives

The objectives of the study serve to guide the research and are therefore resented as follows:

- Determine the roles and functions of the SGB in relation to school's safety;
- Examine the status of safety in schools in the Mamabolo Circuit in the Limpopo Province;
- Investigate the effectiveness of the SGBs in promoting safety in the Mamabolo Circuit in Limpopo Province; and
- Recommend possible ways of promoting safety in schools

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### B.2. Interview Questions

1. What is your understanding of the school safety policy?

Explain:

---

2. Why is this policy being implemented in schools?

Explain:

---

3. What, if any, are your responsibilities with regards to the promotion of the school safety?

Explain:

---

4. Describe your involvement in the school safety policy.

Explain:

---

5. Have you received any training with regard to the promotion of safety in schools?

Explain:

---

6. How often do you conduct safety meetings?

Explain:

---

7. What systems/procedures have been put in place to ensure the implementation of school safety policy in schools?

Explain:

---

8. Is there synergy between the safety policy and other governance systems in the school?

Explain:

---

9. What, in your view, is the level of adherence to safety policy?

---

10. What is the level of the overall performance of the school with respect to safety?

Explain:

---





## ANNEXURE B: OBSERVATION SHEET

**Project Title:**

**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

The researcher will use the following sheet to observe the safety measures at school.  
Tick the most appropriate/applicable

<b>Observer's name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Name of School:</b>	
<b>ENVIRONMENT:</b> (The following questions seek to establish the general state of the physical infrastructure of the school.)	
How many blocks in the school? _____	
Rails on stairs? <b>Yes</b> ___ <b>No</b> ___	
Emergency exit? <b>Yes</b> ___ <b>No</b> ___	
Emergency assembly point? <b>Yes</b> ___ <b>No</b> ___	
Walls: <b>Cracked</b> ___ <b>Damaged</b> ___ <b>Undamaged</b> ___	
Windows: <b>Broken</b> ___ <b>Undamaged</b> ___	
Doors: <b>Broken</b> ___ <b>Undamaged</b> ___	
Ceiling: <b>Damaged</b> ___ <b>Undamaged</b> ___	
Roof: <b>Damaged</b> ___ <b>Undamaged</b> ___	
Electrical sockets, DB, plugs, wires: <b>Open</b> ___ <b>Secured</b> ___	
Any construction: <b>Yes</b> ___ <b>No</b> ___	

**Explain, if YES:**

---

---

**EQUIPMENT:**

Fire extinguisher: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Hose pipes: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Fire detectors: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

**PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

**A: LABORATORY**

Safety glasses: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

Hand gloves: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

Respirator mask: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

Lab coat: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

Rubber boots: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

**B. KITCHEN**

Apron: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

Hats/nets: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

Hand gloves: **Yes**\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL NOTES (General observations):**



**ANNEXURE C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

To be filled by the interviewee prior to the interview(s)

**Project Title:**

**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

Declaration

I,

\_\_\_\_\_,  
agree to be interviewed for this research project, which is being produced by **Mohlala, Aletta** as a student at the University of Limpopo.

I certify that I have been duly informed of the confidentiality of information collected for this research project and the anonymity of my participation; that I have been given satisfactory answers to any inquiries concerning project procedures and other matters; and that I have been advised that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in this research project or activity at any time without prejudice.

I agree to participate in one or more interviews for this project. I understand that such interviews and related materials will be kept completely anonymous, and that the results of this study may be published in different forms of academic publication(s).

I agree that any information obtained from this research may be used in any way considered best for this study.

Signature of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEXURE D: FINAL CONSENT FORM**

To be approved and signed by the interviewee and the interviewer prior to publication of the material derived from the interview(s).

**Project Title:**

**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

*Dear Participant:*

*This form provides us with final authorization to use material from your interview in this research project or any subsequent publication, which may emanate from this research, e.g. articles or conference papers.*

*You may grant use rights for this “as is,” or with the modifications you specify, if any. See “Conditions” at the bottom of the form*

I,

\_\_\_\_\_,  
hereby grant the right to use information from recordings and or notes taken in interviews of me, to **Mohlala, Aletta** as a student at the University of Limpopo, and as presented to me as a draft copy.

I understand that the interview records will be kept by the interviewer and the project, and that the information contained in the interviews may be used in materials to be made available to the general public.

\_\_\_\_\_ *By initialling here, I also agree to be identified by name in the project and related materials.*

\_\_\_\_\_ *By initialling here, I decline to be identified by name in the project and related materials but I do consent to the material provided may be used.*

**The following conditions limit the release of information, as agreed between the interviewer and the interviewee:**

\_\_\_\_\_ *None needed (initial)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Material may be released once corrections I specified have been made (initial)*

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) Material may be released once it has been edited by a third party  
namely (please specify),

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNEXURE E: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



**University of Limpopo**  
Department of Research Administration and Development  
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa  
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
**ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 02 October 2019

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TREC/345/2019: PG

**PROJECT:**

**Title:** The Role of School Governing Bodies in The Implementation of Safety Policy: A Case Study of the Mamabolo Circuit, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

**Researcher:** A Mohlala  
**Supervisor:** Prof E van Royen  
**Co-Supervisor/s:** N/A  
**School:** Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership  
**Degree:** Master of Public Administration and Management

**PROF P MASOKO**  
**CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

**Note:**

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

*Finding solutions for Africa*



## ANNEXURE F: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY



**LIMPOPO**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ref: 2/2/2    Enq: Mabogo MG    Tel No: 015 290 9365    E-mail: [MabogoMG@edu.limpopo.gov.za](mailto:MabogoMG@edu.limpopo.gov.za)

Mohlala A  
P O Box 1364  
Sovenga  
0727

#### RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **'THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA.'**
3. The following conditions should be considered:
  - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the School concerned.
  - 3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
  - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
  - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
  - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MOHLALA A

CONFIDENTIAL

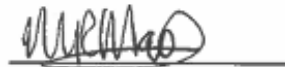
Cnr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700  
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4494

***The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!***

4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



**Ms NB Mutheiwana**  
**Head of Department**

04/11/2019

Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MOHLALA A

CONFIDENTIAL

## ANNEXURE G: LANGUAGE EDITING LETTER

### Letter of Professional Language Editing Confirmation

To Whom it may concern

This is to certify that I, Dr. Moodiela Victor Mathobela (MA, Linguistics; PhD, Higher Education Studies) language edited Mrs. Mohlala Aletta (Student Number: 200306156)'s Masters

Dissertation entitled:

**“THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAMABOLO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA.”**

I hope you find this in order.

For further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the following:  
063 073 3135 or [Moodiela@yahoo.com](mailto:Moodiela@yahoo.com)

Date: 22 May 2020

Dr. Mathobela Moodiela Victor  
Professional Language Editor

*Mathobela*